

Speech Delivered at Greek Festival
on 11/10/44 at RHA
At Symposion

WHAT THE GREEK HERITAGE MEANS TO ME

In the first instance, it must be made known that I am South African. My parents immigrated from Greece. I am looked upon as a South African of Greek descent.

Secondly, I feel one must attempt to define Greek heritage as that which has to do with the Greek way of life, custom, culture, religion, family unit, patriotism. Hellenism, I think it is correct to say, has indeed a very rich history. It has produced a rich civilisation and is undoubtedly responsible to a large degree for the way we live today in western civilisation.

I am a descendant of these people who have a great historical background and rich civilisation.

My erfenis is een wat deur die gemeenskap waardeur en erken word. Sy rykdom was nog nooit misken nie, wat die sielkundige uitwerking het om 'n persoon trots te laat voel en hom nog meer vasberade te maak om hierdie erfenis te bewaar. Dit is 'n vorm van sielsverryking - dit verryk jou in jou allerdaagse lewe.

Voordat ek verder gaan, is dit belangrik om kennis te neem dat ek, as 'n Suid-Afrikaner, die voorreg geniet om deel te wees van hierdie baie trotse volk - 'n baie dapper en volwasse volk ten spyte van sy betreklike jeugdigheid. As ons die Afrikaner beskou as die ruggraat van hierdie Suid-Afrikaanse volk - wat ek in alle eerlikheid glo is 'n ware en redelike veronderstelling - weet ons dat hulle verryk is deur die kulture van 'n aantal Europese volkere, en wil dit blyk dat die Griekse-kultuur heelwat daarmee te doen gehad het. Die Afrikaner, veral die akademikus, ~~student~~ toon 'n groot waardering vir Hellenisme, of dit nou letterkunde, filosofie, geskiedenis of wat ookal is.

Die Afrikaner - die Suid-Afrikaner in die algemeen, erken nog steeds die belangrikheid van die Griekse-kultuur. As gevolg hiervan, is ek as 'n Suid-Afrikaner wat die "geboortereg" tot Hellenisme het, baie trots om dit te kan behou. Ek voel dat dit aanvullend tot die Suid-Afrikaanse kultuur is: dit skeur my nie in twee nie, maar verryk my eerder deur my die geleentheid te gee om die beste van die twee kulture te geniet.

Let us examine some of the factors which are common to both the South African way of life and that of the Greek way of life, and which has the effect of making me proudly retain my Hellenistic heritage - it does not create an embarrassment to the culture and way of life to my country of birth, South Africa.

Godsdiens :

Godsdiens speel in die eerste plek 'n groot rol in my Griekse erfenis. Dit het sy geregmatigde plek in die gesinseenheid, in die alledaagse lewe, in die lewe van die Volk. My tweede kultuur-spesifiek in my geval weens my gebondenheid aan Afrikaanse huisgesinne-toon aan my dat dit die Suid-Afrikaanse leefwyse is. Ek twyfel glad nie dat ons almal saamstem dat godsdiens nog nooit sy voorrang in ons Suid-Afrikaanse leefwyse verloor het nie.

Vaderlandsliefde :

Dit het sy geregmatigde plek in Hellenisme. Dit is inderdaad 'n baie sterk faktor - die geskiedenis toon dat Hellenisme groot onderdrukking moes weerstaan, spesifiek in die geval van Turkse oorheersing. My Suid-Afrikaanse erfenis bewys dat dieselfde teenstand gebied sal word teenoor enige persoon wat my wil onderdruk as 'n Suid-Afrikaner. Dus is my erfenis aanvullend. As 'n Griek voel ek baie sterk omtrent enigeen wat my of my volk benadeel. ~~Dit is hierdie gevoel wat die Griekse baie simpatiek teenoor Suid-Afrika laat staan.~~

Family Unit :

Hellenism, Greek heritage places very great importance on the family unit. This is also the respected way of life in South Africa.

Natuur en 'n Vrye Lewe :

Dit is ook 'n gemeenskaplike band tussen my Griekse erfenis en die gewoontes en leefwyse van my geboorteland. Liefde vir die natuur, 'n vrye lewe. Die betrokkenheid van mensdom met die bodem is iets wat ons binne in ons aanvoel. Ek kan nie woorde vind om my waardering vir hierdie natuurliefde - die plattelandse of boerelewe-behoorlik uit te druk nie.

And so there are many more other factors in my Greek heritage which allows me to see deeper and appreciate my South African way of life even more. There are matters such as politics, folklore, emotions, which all enrich the soul.

~~It is important to know that I am able to retain my heritage freely. I am encouraged in South Africa - the South African way of life encourages one to retain ones heritage. It undoubtedly would have been a different story if the Greeks were suppressed in South Africa, then the retention of the Greek heritage and its importance to me would take on a different form altogether. Its purpose, in short, would be that of survival.~~

Dit is baie belangrik om daarop te let dat ek nie voel dat ek twee gode dien nie, deurdat ek my Griekse erfenis behou het. My geboortereg ~~lees u kan sien~~ verryk my grootliks. Dit stel ~~my~~ in staat om my Suid-Afrikaanse erfenis nog meer te waardeer. Alhoewel die geskiedenis van die volke nie dieselfde is nie, kan ek, omdat ek intiem verbonde is aan albei ^{beide} kulture, die basiese motiewe en leefwyse in Suid-Afrika begryp. Dit verskil in werklikheid geensins van my Griekse erfenis nie, alhoewel ons weet dat Hellenisme ontwikkel het oor baie meer jare en ondersteun is deur 'n langer tydperk van geskiedkundige gebeurtenisse.

Ek is nogtans trots om my geboortereg, erfenis, Hellenisme te geniet, aangesien ek voel dat dit my baie verryk en my in staat stel om die baie seëninge ~~dinge~~ in die lewe te waardeer.



Telegramadres: Rauniv
Teleks: 438152 SA
Telefoon: 726-5000

Ons verw.

Datum 8 September 1977

Mr P Stathoulis
Chairman
Federation of the Hellenic
Communities of South Africa
PO Box 140
ALBERTON
1450

Dear Mr Stathoulis

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate as a member of a panel on the discussion of the topic "What the Greek heritage means to me" during the Festival of Greek Culture to take place at the Rand Afrikaans University from 11 to 22 October 1977.

The symposium will take place after the opening function on Tuesday 11 October. The opening of the Festival will be performed by His Excellency Mr EP Kerkinos, the Greek Ambassador to South Africa. The South African Minister of National Education, The Honourable PGJ Koornhof, will also be present.

I enclose a folder in which you will find all details about the Festival as well as the names of other members of the panel who will take part in the discussion.

The panel discussion will, as far as possible, take place in Afrikaans. It will, therefore, be appreciated if you will use both languages in your talk which must be limited to a maximum of 6 minutes. You are, however, free to use only one language if you so prefer.

I wish to extend to you hearty welcome to the University and to thank you for agreeing to participate in the panel discussion.

Yours sincerely

MJ ROETS
DEPUTY PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY

FESTIVAL OF GREEK CULTURE

The Rand Afrikaans University, in association with the Foundation for Education, Science and Technology in Pretoria and the Greek community of Johannesburg and the Reef, is organizing a FESTIVAL OF GREEK CULTURE from the 11th to the 22nd October, 1977. The Festival will be held at the Rand Afrikaans University, Auckland Park, Johannesburg.

The aim of the project is to stimulate interest in Greek art, architecture and literature, and to show how the world of Classical Greece informs, and is relevant to the modern world.

The other main purpose of the Festival is to strengthen the existing ties of friendship and understanding between South Africa and Greece.

Several committees are responsible for the Festival. Representatives of the Greek Community serve on all the committees and they are taking an active part in the organization.

The Festival of Greek Culture will consist of exhibitions of visual displays, slide and film presentations, lectures and theatrical productions, as well as a programme of traditional folk-dances and folk singing. Visual displays will feature films on Greece, photographic displays of Greek sculpture and architecture, literature, models of ancient Greek landmarks, reproductions of well-known Greek sculptures, and examples of handicraft and household collections belonging to various members of the Greek community.

Speakers will include well-known authorities on the rôle of the Greeks in world politics, literature, the Byzantine civilization, philosophy and Greece and the Bible.

One of the highlights of the Festival will be a dramatic presentation on the 12th of October, when excerpts from four Greek dramas will be presented in the Auditorium of the University by a professional cast under the direction of Dr. Hermien Dommissie.

The Festival will close with a **panygiri** on Saturday, 22nd October, 1977. Pupils from Greek, Afrikaans and English schools will take part in a programme of music and dancing. Various musical items will be presented throughout the afternoon and evening, and traditional food and wines will be served. The evening will reach a climax with the well-known Zorba-dance, in which the public are invited to participate.

A souvenir programme with messages of goodwill, details of the various presentations and translations of Greek poetry will serve as a permanent memento of the Festival of Greek Culture.

* * *

Members of the public are cordially invited to attend the Festival of Greek Culture. A list of events appears on the opposite page.

FESTIVAL OF GREEK CULTURE — 11 to 22 OCTOBER, 1977

PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, 11th OCTOBER

- 17h30 Official opening by His Excellency Mr. E. P. Kerkinos, Greek Ambassador to South Africa SANLAM AUDITORIUM
- 18h00 Symposium SANLAM AUDITORIUM
"What the Greek heritage means to me"
Members:
Prof. Gerrit Viljoen, Chairman; Mr. Pelops Angelopoulos,
Mr. John Calinikos, Prof. E. L. de Kock, Judge Kowie Marais,
Mr. Peter Stathoulis, Mr. Heine Toerien
- 19h00 Reception FOYER
- 20h00 Three short documentary films on Greece SANLAM AUDITORIUM

WEDNESDAY, 12th OCTOBER

- 20h00 DIONYSIA — an evening of Greek theatre under the direction of Hermien Dommissie and featuring well-known players like Patrick Mynhardt, Wilna Snyman, Will Roberts, Tobie Cronjé, Gretha Fox, Annelize van der Ryst and Annette Engelbrecht SANLAM AUDITORIUM
- Booking at Computicket R3, R2, R1

THURSDAY, 13th OCTOBER

- 19h30 Lecture on "Ancient Greek Sculpture" by Prof. C. A. van Rooy of the University of South Africa (Afrikaans) LIBRARY AUDITORIUM
- 20h15 Lecture on "The rôle of the Greeks in world politics" by Prof. C. F. Nieuwoudt of the University of Pretoria LIBRARY AUDITORIUM (Afrikaans)

MONDAY, 17th OCTOBER

- 20h00 "Modern Greek poetry in translations" LECTURE ROOM D103
Producer: Cecile Cilliers
Text: George Bizos and William Henderson
Readers: Lucy Argyrides, Cecile Cilliers, Rika Cilliers, Breytje Breytenbach and Stephen Gray

TUESDAY, 18th OCTOBER

- 14h30 — 22h00 Symposium of the Mediaeval Study Group on "Mediaeval Greece" followed by a recital by the choir of the Greek Orthodox Church LECTURE ROOM D103

THURSDAY, 20th OCTOBER

- 17h00 Lecture by Prof. P. J. du Plessis, Chairman of the Department of Biblical Studies at the Rand Afrikaans University on "Greece and the Bible" (Afrikaans) LECTURE ROOM D103
- 19h30 Lecture by Prof. M. Versveld of the University of Cape Town: "An introduction to Plato" (English) LECTURE ROOM D103
- 20h15 Lecture by Father Minas Constantinou on "The Church in Greece — a historical review" to be followed by Byzantine music and film show LECTURE ROOM D103

SATURDAY, 22nd OCTOBER

- 15h00 Programme arranged by Schools Committee (Music, dancing, songs, traditional costumes, exhibition of handwork) SPORTS HALL AND OTHER AREAS
- PANYGIRI — Grand Finale UNIVERSITY CLUB (FOYER AND RESTAURANT)
- Lighthearted ending of FESTIVAL. Traditional Greek food and wines will be on sale and musical items will be presented throughout the afternoon and evening.
- 19h30 Display of traditional and modern Greek dances SANLAM AUDITORIUM
- 21h00 Discotheque

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions of casts of Greek sculpture, models of well-known Greek landmarks, photographs of ancient and modern Greece, examples of handicraft and household articles will be on display every day (except Sundays) from 09h00 to 22h00 in the exhibition areas, A Ring level 1 and C Ring levels 1 and 2.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE FESTIVAL



GRIEKSE KULTUURFEES
ΦΕΣΤΙΒΑΛ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΥ
ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ
FESTIVAL
OF GREEK CULTURE